
West Jordan District Court Public Art

In March, 2004 the Utah Public Art Program, in cooperation with the Utah State Division of Facilities Construction and Management released a call for entries to artists interested in creating site specific public art for the new West Jordan District Court.

A community base art selection committee was formed to include:

Janice Ashby	Administrative Office of the Courts
The Honorable Judith Atherton	Third District Court Judge
Gary “Bo” Fairman	Clerk of Court – Third District Juvenile Court
Lynn Hinrichs	Div. of Facilities Construction & Management
Jolene Matheson	West Jordan Arts Council & Community Representative
Kevin Miller	GSBS Architects
The Honorable C. Dane Nolan	Third District Juvenile Court Judge
Alexander Schiel	Schiel Architects & Utah Arts Council Board
Jamie Petrogeorge	Deputy Clerk - Sandy District Court

In the Call for Proposals the committee included the following:

It is the art selection committee's vision that art designed for this facility will foster the notion of the court as a part of the community. In the same way that this building relates to the neighboring park and city center, the art should also speak to the courts relationship to the community and its role in problem solving and conflict resolution. The art should be inviting and create a feel of ease and openness to the community and families who take part in the facility.

Seventy-four artists from around the country submitted applications for the public art project. Four artists were named as finalist for the project and were invited to present their proposal in person to the committee. The artist selected by the committee and awarded the commission was Doug Soelberg from Orem, Utah.

Mr. Soelberg's explained his proposal:

The design concept that I am proposing for art in the new West Jordan Courts building is a response to the architecture of the building and to the intended use of the facility. The renderings of the building convey a solemn formality of its purpose. One gets the sense that serious business goes on there. Most of what goes on in the building is serious business. It can affect the people working at the building, and those brought there by various situations, in dramatic ways.

The Architecture of this building represents the formality of our cultural laws and ethics. It is linear, conservative, and solid. There is a sense that it cannot be shaken apart...that it can stand through any storm.

The concept for my art proposal is to show the tension between that solid societal system and the human individual who is imperfect. I would do that, in a sense, by scribbling on the building itself. More precisely, I would like to add design elements to the curtain wall of the east and north elevations of the main entry since this is where the formal collision begins.

In effect, the work will be a stained glass but not in the traditional sense. There will be colored glass and lead lines used in an abstract and contemporary way. There will be formal blocks of color to mirror the formality of the architecture and straight lead lines to mimic the lines of the building. As the eye moves across the glass expanse, the lines will gradually start bending and curving and jumping out of order suggesting the human element of imperfection.

Mr. Soelberg's glass art piece will be approximately 24' tall by 48' long and will be suspended just inside the large glass wall making up the entrance to the new Courts facility.

The Public Art Program of the Utah Arts Council was created in 1985 through the passage of the "Utah Percent for Art Act." Through this program over 150 artworks have been commissioned and placed in state building throughout the state. Each artwork has been commissioned through the committee process involving community, architects, arts councils and site users.

More information on this project and other local and National public art projects is available on the Utah Arts Council Public Art Program web site at: www.arts.utah.gov/publicart or by calling 801-533-3585 or 801-533-3586.